

Doolittle House (Demarest House)
Rutgers University Campus at the southwest
corner of George Street and Seminary Place
New Brunswick
Middlesex County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-714

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

DOOLITTLE HOUSE (DEMAREST HOUSE)

HABS
NJ
12-15880

Location: Rutgers University Campus at the southwest corner 15-
of George Street and Seminary Place, New Brunswick,
Middlesex County, New Jersey

Present Owner
and Occupant: Rutgers University

Present Use: Graduate Women's Residence

Brief Statement
of Significance: Built 1850-1870, this two-story, brownstone house
is typical of its period, and was occupied at one
time by Dr. William H. S. Demarest.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original owner: Mary A. B. Doolittle (to 1906)
Present owner: Rutgers University
2. Date of erection: 1850-1870
3. Notes on alterations and additions: Interior somewhat altered.
4. Important old views: Old photographs in Rutgers University Library, Rutgersensia Collection, Buildings and Grounds folder.
5. Sources of Information: Middlesex County deeds, L.379, p.381ff.
6. Likely sources not yet investigated: None known.

- B. Historical Events Connected with Structure: Dr. William H. S. Demarest, president of Rutgers College and later president of the New Brunswick Theological Seminary, occupied this house.

Prepared by Donald A. Sinclair
Curator of Special Collections
Rutgers University Library
September 1960

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. General Statement: This is a two-story and basement, brownstone house with slate roof, in good repair.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Layout: The house is H-shaped with a rectangular front block and a two foot projecting center bay. This center bay interrupts the main cornice, having a gabled roof at right angles to the gable roof of the main block. A glassed-in entrance porch is on the projecting center bay. The rectangular rear section is parallel with the front section and joined to it by a connecting portion, both with gable roofs of the same height as the front block. In the larger recess between the front and rear portions, on the south side of the connecting portion, is a one-story wooden porch.
2. The walls are brownstone, ashlar, seam faced, with dressed brownstone quoins at all of the corners. The foundation, about two feet high, is also brownstone ashlar with a beveled water table of dressed brownstone, flush with the ashlar walls. All window and door sills are dressed brownstone.
3. Porches: The front entrance has an arch within the gable of the porch, a stone floor, and foundation and steps of dressed brownstone. The corner wood piers are square and chamfered at the edges. The glass enclosure is apparently later than the house.

The side porch is three bays in width, with two slender, chamfered wood posts and a wood railing with straight balusters. Three wooden steps at the center bay lead to the ground.

The kitchen door is covered with a small glass-enclosed porch with a gable roof and wooden floor and steps.
4. Chimneys: There are five husky, rectangular, brick chimneys, two each on the main ridges and one on the connecting ridge. All are interior chimneys and are stepped back between a high base and a corbeled brick capping.
5. Roof: All are gable roofs covered with slate.
6. Cornice: The main cornice is entirely of wood, strongly projected and supported by evenly spaced, band-sawn brackets which are received by a large board with molded bottom against the stone wall. All exterior woodwork is painted dark brown.
7. Windows: Most of the windows on the front and side elevations are narrow and coupled within stone trim. The first floor has flat lintels and one-light over two-light double-hung sash. All sash are wood. Each of the paired second-floor windows has a semi-circular lintel and

one-light over one-light double-hung sash. On the second floor front elevation there is one window on each side of the projecting center bay with two-light over two-light sash. These windows project through the main cornice, each with a gable roof and supported on a shallow stone shelf with stone brackets. At the rear, two single windows with two-light over four-light double-hung sash flank the kitchen entry. Second floor windows across the rear and one over the side porch have two-light over two-light double-hung sash.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

1. Floor plans: The front section of the house has a central hall type plan. The rear of the hall opens on to the side porch. To the left is the library, to the right the living room with a projecting square bay or alcove having a twin window on the side elevation and single windows at the front and rear. The bay windows are narrow, with one-light over two-light double-hung sash. The living room connects with the dining room, which is in the connecting link or middle section of the H-shaped house. In the rear section are the kitchen, pantry, and stairs to the cellar.
2. Stairway: The main stairway is in the central hall. A heavy balustrade starts from a turned newel post and has turned balusters and a heavy molded railing.
3. Flooring: Narrow stripped hardwood throughout.
4. Trim: All trim is heavy, classical type, with stepped-back facets and molded back-band. Base is heavy, with one step back and heavy base molding. Beneath window sills are molded wood panels. Principal rooms have run-plaster cornices.
5. Walls: Plastered and papered throughout.
6. Mantels: White marble mantelpieces with circle-headed openings with iron frames; shaped marble shelves, central molded key block, and marble hearths.
7. Lighting fixtures: Modern electric.

Prepared by George Brokaw Howell
Architect, Rutgers University (ret.)
New Brunswick, New Jersey
December 1960